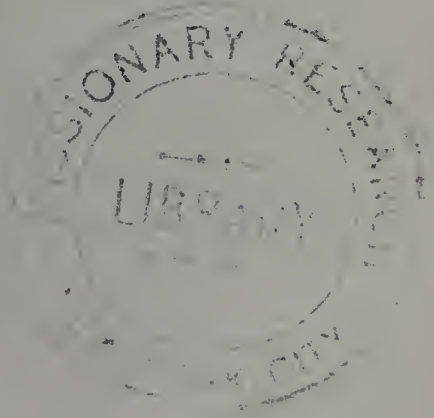
FOUR YEARS IN SOUTHERN ASIA



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Four Years in Southern Asia

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The Quadrennial Report of the
Missionary Bishops for Southern Asia
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FOUR YEARS IN SOUTHERN ASIA

The four years under review in this report of the Southern Asia field are among the most momentous ever seen in Asia, and perhaps in the unfolding history of the world. In 1904 war began between Russia and Japan. The confident expectation of practically all the world was that after a period of gallant campaign Japan would inevitably be defeated. The extraordinary military and naval sagacity and aptitude of the Japanese, with the moral and financial help of England and America, brought about a totally different result. In August, 1906, largely through the kind offices of the president of the United States, supported by King Edward of England, the Treaty of Portsmouth was signed—a treaty which clearly recognized the military preeminence of Japan over what had been considered one of the foremost European powers. The effect of this victory of an Asiatic power over the great power of Northern Europe is registered in the thinking of every Asiatic—the purlieus of Canton, the wilds of Manchuria, the barios of Luzon, and the bazaars of India alike have been moved to the depths. The wonder-working, invincible white race has been met and ignominiously defeated by a small, well-disciplined, efficient section of the brown race. A new leaven has been introduced into the thinking of Asia. National and racial self-consciousness has everywhere been quickened, and a new thinking has begotten a new attitude. The times call for profoundest consideration from all who have any dealings—economic, commercial, political, or religious—with the peoples of Asia. And such is the solidarity of the human family that awakened Asia must necessarily give something of anxiety to all thinking men.

Southern Asia is not directly concerned with the areas of the late war. But the results of that war may be read on every page of our newly written history. The immediate effect in India has

been the quickening of the national spirit and a passionate expression of the belief that India's sons also are able to direct their own affairs, or, at least, to have intrusted to them a very much larger degree of self-government. In the Malay Archipelago, with peoples less advanced and less intelligent, the increased power of Japan is dimly felt to be a threat, rather than an incitement, and the reported experiences of Formosa and Korea lend stability to European rule. Though even here among the large body of scattered Chinese, a new spirit of self-assertion is evident. In the Philippines, too, though at first Japanese success produced some wild talk, the American concession of a larger degree of self-government than has yet been vouchsafed to a dominated people in the history of nations, together with the object lesson of how Asiatics may fare at the hands of other Asiatics, has made for a degree of content with the American program that could scarcely have been looked for at the beginning of the quadrennium.

How has all this intensity of movement, with its deep stir of spirit in whatever direction the people may have moved, affected the progress of Christianity and of our Methodist missions in particular? It would scarcely be within the legitimate limits of this report to enter exhaustively into this most interesting question. But, in brief, it may be said the results seem on the surface to be for good and for evil, but, more deeply considered, the seeming evil is but the unfamiliar aspect of larger good. Somehow such is the essential goodness of the great currents that flow in human history and such the resources of the great Spirit of God who constrains their direction, that every great upheaval of human kind will be found to be but the birth throes of the kingdom of God among men. The easily apparent good of all this Asiatic movement is the new valuation put upon men as men—the new sense of human worth. East may still be East and West West, but the West has a new respect for the East and the East a deeper and more reasonable self-respect. The ancient superstitions and follies of the centuries, which had no reason for existence but immemorial custom, have received a rude shock. For it is clearly seen that the Asiatic achieved success by welcoming and skillfully adapting the new intelligence and science of the West. The stir in eduea-

tional circles all over Asia, even extending to questions of the education of women, bears witness to this awakening. Above all, the people are finding themselves. There has been a longer stride toward democracy during the quadrennium than in any half century, or, possibly, any century, of the past. And if these and other marks of good seem to be accompanied by a growing headiness—a new attitude of impatience, if not arrogance, toward all foreign suggestion, and a new inversion in the realms both of thought and endeavor, arising from the supposed sufficiency of Asia unto herself—this is and can only be temporary. The touch of arrogance that youth assumes in the presence of directing maturity is often the surest sign of felt immaturity. The East begins to know better than ever that the West holds the treasures of knowledge and experience in affairs that must be had for largest life. Many of the best minds already see that the chief of these treasures is religion; that knowledge of God and relation to him that enlarge the horizon, constrain conduct, compact society, and yet free men for the largest individual progress. Here and there the cry has been raised, particularly in India and by a kind of neo-patriotic movement of Chinese outside the empire (the four or six millions who live in the lands of Southern Asia), that their own religions are sufficient to the salvation of their people. But underneath is the deeper persuasion that the ethnic faiths hold an attitude toward current life that prove them anachronisms, and that the only hope of raising the East to the coveted level of the West is not only by using our science in all its varied applications to create economic values and military fitness, but by receiving those great fundamental ideas of religion that have hitherto been considered merely the ideals of missionary enthusiasts but are now clearly seen to underlie and to conserve every great progress in actual life.

INDIA

This great field needs restatement before the Church. Two wrong and mischievous ideas prevail—first, that the land is on the whole already evangelized; second, that, being mainly under the British flag, it may safely be left to England for its gospel. Both these views are superficial and will not bear the pressure

of facts. Among the great movements of the quadrennium is the launching of a "National Home Missionary Society" by the united native churches of India. The chief reason given for the launching of this society in the preamble issued by its central committee is the fact that over one hundred millions of people in India are not yet touched by any of the gospel agencies at work. And among the other two hundred millions it should be remembered that all the combined missions of Europe and America have as yet really touched but a very small fraction. The completed program is yet a long way off. Nor is England able to meet the entire demand. Did she withhold her hand in China, and Africa, and South America, and elsewhere, she might more nearly meet India's needs. But even then the Englishman is under a disability from which the American is free. He is of the dominant race. He cannot altogether escape being classed with the rulers, toward whom there is increasing restlessness.

When Charles Cuthbert Hall, the eloquent Christian apologist, appeared before the intellectual leaders of India he was careful to prevent any break in the force of his apology by the conscious presence of any race feeling. He was careful, therefore, to announce himself as a university man from America, a man of catholic temper and of nationality unrelated to any of the irritating questions that might disturb the minds of his hearers.

The advantages of British rule are great and the good it has conferred illimitable. Nevertheless, the shadows which accompany the lights do not lie across the American. Perfect protection of life and property and perfect freedom in work, with kindly recognition of all sociological and economic efforts—and this without any trace of the popular bias that prevails against the ruling class—are the inviting conditions under which American missions are asked to work in this wide, needy empire. Let it be remembered, too, that the material to be wrought upon is among the most valuable in all the non-Christian world. The Indian has a genius for spiritual religion. To others religion may be a department of life; to him it fills the earth and sky. A living intensity of religious desire possesses him. In all Asia is no such religious temper, in all the world no such religious

aptitude. Japan may be the scientific brain of Asia and China its strong laboring hands and burden-bowed back, but the burning heart of Asia is India. Once already has India religiously conquered Asia. Not only did she give Lao-tse the philosophy of Taoism, but when the young enthusiasm of Buddha overleaped the mountains of the north she gave religion to China and Japan, and one half the world is to-day thinking the religious thoughts of India. Cannot Christ do with India what Buddha did? India on fire means Asia in conflagration. To this great-souled land let America hasten with the riches of Christ, and how abundant the fruitage let facts and figures, and not fancies and hopes, bear witness.

REVIVAL AND JUBILEE

The quadrennium in India has been marked by two notable things—the revival and the jubilee. The close of fifty years of notable history was made the occasion of a very happy gathering of a large body of American visitors, among whom we joyfully welcomed the official visitors, Bishops FitzGerald and Foss, with Drs. Goucher, Leonard, and Mrs. Bishop Foss, the president of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, and, above all, Mrs. William Butler—name most precious, presence most winsome. For all the interest shown and for the special jubilee gifts received from thousands of good friends we are deeply thankful.

More important in its bearing on the outcome of the four years is the great revival interest that has prevailed, particularly in our oldest fields in North India. The last General Conference appointed a Commission on Evangelism and gave new emphasis to the old Methodist position. We of South Asia carried this emphasis to our fields, and God has blessed us. Revival fires have burned upon our altars and the revival spirit has stimulated our pastors and entered our schools and colleges. Not only have we seen hundreds of pupils converted but a great number have been consciously called into the work of the ministry, and any reproach of barrenness that may ever have lain against our high schools and colleges has disappeared in the almost universal religious stir and enthusiasm in our places of learning. By actual count four hundred male student volunteers are found in our schools. Of these over a score are in the Reid Christian

College, while in our girls' schools are large numbers of young women who expect under the limitations of Oriental life to be distinctly engaged in the service of the Church. Meanwhile the churches have been uplifted, the people deepened in religious life and experience, and such gains have been made from the surrounding non-Christians as give us greater fixity of hope that community and nation-wide movements are not improbable in a nearer future than any just thinking has hitherto dared to entertain.

At the jubilee one of the notable sessions was that in which five hundred and twenty-three persons were baptized from raw heathenism on profession of their faith. It was a question in the minds of some as to whether this sample of wholesale baptizing would not demonstrate, if followed up, the instability of the mass movements which have prevailed among us. Particular pains have, therefore, been taken to follow up the results, and to our grateful surprise the latest report from the district in which these Christians live shows, as a result of their personal testimony and earnest effort among relatives and friends, that one thousand persons have been baptized since the jubilee. No, the revival in India is not a straw fire which will presently die down. It is a living movement. It is but a quickening of what in a measure has been there for the last twenty years, the proof of which is in the greatly increased spiritual power of the native ministry and the added weight of the testimony of plain people scattered throughout the empire.

MEMBERSHIP

On Bishop Thoburn's first furlough, after five years of service, he was able to tell the Church at home that he had the joy to report a Christian community of three hundred in the India Mission. At the end of thirty years that little company had spread into wider areas and increased to the number of eighty-six hundred. In the quadrennium preceding our jubilee celebration, areas had still widened and the numbers increased to one hundred and forty-six thousand. It is now our high pleasure—a pleasure accompanied by a deep sense of the obligations involved—to report that the community of Southern Asia during the past four years, adding the latest returns of the

Philippine Conference, which was omitted in the Central Conference Minutes, has risen to a total of two hundred and seventeen thousand four hundred and ninety, a gain during the quadrennium of 71,490, or something over forty-nine per cent. When we consider the figures involved we believe this to be the noblest gain ever made by the Church over so wide an area among so many diverse peoples in pagan lands. Methodism in India is no longer an exotic. It is not chiefly the foreign missionary who is either its apologist or exponent. The sons and daughters of the soil have been gathered in great numbers, and, though it may be many years before the inspiring presence of the American with his godly traditions and vigorous grasp of Christian truth may be spared from India, and though it may be many years before India will come with any request for autonomy or even harbor the thought that the presence of her American teachers is anything but a source of inspiration to be recognized with gratitude and responsive affection, nevertheless, it is the Indian teacher, the Bible reader and the humble pathfinder and "holder-up" who are really the agents in that marvelous work of grace which is thrusting Methodism forward at so remarkable a rate in Southern Asia.

EDUCATION

It is well within the memory of the older missionaries that frequent controversies arose in former days regarding the comparative value of evangelistic and educational agencies. This has disappeared, for we now find that the school is the seed plot of the Church, and nowhere has the revival brought forth more blessed results than in the schools of India. It has been our great joy to read of the splendid results in the schools at home, and we, too, have been blessed beyond measure in seeing our missionary schools in India almost without exception visited with marked revival power. Powerful have been the outpourings of God's Spirit in the District Conferences, and it may be said that equally striking demonstrations of the Spirit of God in the hearts of men have been among the boys and girls, young men and young women, of our India schools. And we joyfully announce to all our patrons who support orphans and provide scholarships in these schools that there are but few who pass through them who do not become the subjects of saving grace

during their stay. In the Reid Christian College and the various high schools from Bangalore, in the south, to Calcutta and the Punjab, wherever a Methodist school is found, there may be found bands of happy Christians, singing the praises of their Lord and bearing earnest testimony to the work of the Spirit in their hearts.

The schools of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, which are the strength of our work among the women of India, have shared equally in this outpouring from above. And perhaps it may be said without invidious distinction that no more powerful agency for the evangelization of India can be found in any single institution than in the school named for that noble woman who gave her life for India's redemption, "The Isabella Thoburn Woman's College of Lucknow." For all these schools, male and female, increased attention must be paid to the furnishing with appropriate buildings and stronger teaching staffs, for with the rise of intelligence the increased demands must be met. The large results secured from our school investments put the matter beyond any question that a more effective agency cannot be found for the extending of the kingdom than that of putting Christian teachers in contact with the children and youth of the land.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

In addition to our boarding and day school agencies is the Sunday school. The registered Sunday school attendance of Southern Asia is three hundred and sixty thousand. Of this number no less than one hundred and sixty thousand, or over forty per cent, are in Methodist Sunday schools. We were the first to emphasize the Sunday school in India, and are to-day still easily in the lead. The Epworth Leagues also are gradually assuming a finer consistency and greater vigor. In over thirty languages five hundred chapters enroll over twenty thousand Leaguers, and the promise for the immediate future in this department is larger than ever.

THE PRESS

Great attention has been paid during the quadrennium to the development of the press as a means of reaching the awakening intelligence of the country. There are four publishing houses

in India and two in the territory outside of India. They have been at work endeavoring to provide Christian literature for the people of various tongues. The variety of languages and dialects and the comparative slowness of communication make it necessary to provide, so far as possible, for the wants of the people from these various points. When it is remembered that we are working in no less than forty-four languages it will be understood why so many publishing houses are necessary. All these houses have, in the main, been successful, and particularly does the Lucknow Publishing House, situated in the midst of our largest Christian population, fill a place of rare usefulness in furnishing to the Christian community in their own tongues a much-needed religious literature, while also publishing millions of pages of matter stimulating the non-Christians, who, in increasing tens of thousands, eagerly seek to know. The other publishing houses are also successful, but they need strengthening, and, while full of promise and demonstrating the necessity for their existence, they must be helped financially.

It needs to be brought prominently to the attention of investing laymen that no more worthy service can be rendered any of the awakening lands of the East than to strengthen the Christian press in these lands. For increasingly the people read, and the silent page, provoking no controversy, bearing its message deep into the intelligence of the reader, oftentimes provides the readiest carriage for fertilizing ideas. We ought to flood all Asia with Christian literature, and to this end all our presses should be greatly strengthened and their output increased a hundredfold.

Before leaving India we would call attention to British Burma, in farther India, where a most hopeful young mission is found among a Buddhist people of singular liveliness and temperament and hospitality in welcoming new ways. Though the mission is small, it is doing good work, and its direct evangelism has been successful beyond ordinary. This mission should be materially strengthened, for it holds promise of large success.

MALAYSIA

The next division of Southern Asia is Malaysia, that peninsula which points south from Asia, with the group of islands extend-

ing from its tip to the borders of Australia. Malaysia is a saucer into which the overflow of China and India is sending a continuous double stream of emigration. This double stream meeting the Malays, themselves divided into various tribes, is making a most curious and most interesting amalgam of human population, which under various flags (chiefly the English and the Dutch) is being compacted into civilized peoples, with stable government and enlarging opportunity for worthy commercial and civic life. In all this subdivision the Methodist Church is the only American organization at work. And the American ministry of the gospel to seventy millions of the human family is confined to the missionaries of the Malaysia Conference. There are several difficulties in this field which are being met and splendidly overcome by as gallant and devoted a band of men and women as serve the Church in any of her foreign fields. The marked feature here is a chain of great schools extending from Penang, on the north, to Buitenzorg, in Java, on the south. In these schools over four thousand boys and girls are under teachers who, while enlarging their earthly horizon and giving them stirring new thoughts regarding the life that is, are also unceasingly bringing to bear upon the problems of that life the knowledge of that larger life "which is and shall be forevermore."

The boys' schools of this Conference are almost wholly self-supporting, and the great contributions that these large and well-appointed schools are making to the evangelization of these lands is one which ought to command the appreciation of the Church. Besides teaching in the classrooms, the teachers at these schools are continually to be found serving the Church in various offices, all the way from the presiding eldership to the teaching of Sunday school classes without any draft on the missionary appropriations. Noble buildings massed in several groups have been provided by local aid and at very little cost to the Church. Properties now valued at half a million dollars, current coin, are being used for the Christian education of the youth of Malaysia. The publishing house here is erecting a very handsome three-story building on one of the most prominent sites in the city. Singapore is so strategic a point in the world's commerce that the printed matter distributed here reaches more millions of diverse peoples, perhaps, than from any other port in

all the world. This gives the publishing house located here peculiar significance and value.

It would be impossible to review the quadrennium without calling attention to the planting of a mission in Java by the Epworth Leagues of the Pittsburg Conference. This movement is without parallel in our history. These bands of young people offered to provide a sufficient sum of money to open a new mission in the densely populated Island of Java, where over thirty million people are found in a territory not much larger than the state of Ohio. The mission is three years old, and already more converts have been reported and more splendid beginnings made than have ever been known in the history of our missions in pagan lands in a similar period of time. And the whole enterprise has been so owned of God as to put it beyond a peradventure that the genesis of the movement was from above. Southern Asia thanks Pittsburg with depths of gratitude.

THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

The youngest of our Conferences in Southern Asia is the Philippine Islands Conference. The growth here has been phenomenal, and the change of sentiment among the people is such as demands notice at our hands. Four years ago the Philippine Islands could scarcely have been described as entirely satisfied with existing conditions. The American occupancy was but six years old. The first two of these years had been marked by disturbances, whieh were immediately repressed by the strong hand of the military forces by which the islands were administered. Then came the early era of eivil government, when the American people, through their representatives, the governor-general and the Philippine Commission, endeavored to create for the people the institutions which should conserve their liberties, promote popular intelligence and rapidly fit the people for the high task of self-government. A public school system was created, which in many regards is the noblest Asia has ever seen. About one thousand school teachers have been seattered through the islands, teaching not only the English tongue and all the rieh deposits of inspiring truth that are found in its literature, but incidentally conveying in their own charaeter and conduct new ideas of manly worth and womanly

grace and usefulness. Courts of law and all the paraphernalia of institutions for the perfect protection of life and property and the preservation of personal independence have been erected. In a word, the largest opportunity has been given to the eight millions of this archipelago to progress in all directions of human welfare. Whatever may be thought of the governmental policy to be pursued in the future, there can be but little question that the American people have been most happy in their treatment of the Philippines up to this time. And when at the close of the tenth year of American occupancy it can be said that over ninety per cent of all the governmental offices are in Filipino hands, that a considerable portion of the higher offices are already administered by the natives, and that for more than a year there has been in existence a Filipino Assembly, in which alone legislation can be originated in all matters affecting the life of the islands, it may be seen that the American administration of these islands is something new in the history of colonial rule. Never has one people treated another with such conspicuous kindness, and, it may be added, conducted their mutual affairs with such marked ability. All this has given rise to a new era of good feeling. Nowhere in all Asia are two races living together in such mutual respect and goodwill as to-day in the Philippine Islands.

Meanwhile the Methodist Church has steadily pressed its missionary work with increasing efficiency. At no time during the four years has there been a body of more than seven male missionaries on the field free for evangelistic work. The terrible pressure upon these men, the unfamiliar climate, the poor housing, the scanty food to be found in the provinces, and the prevalence of tropical disease have made the results in the breaking of health and enforced departures from the field a constant source of the utmost anxiety and embarrassment. The Board and the Missionary secretaries have helped us nobly, but in spite of it all the field has been undermanned and the men overworked to an extent that has caused such an aggregate of physical breakdowns as the Church ought not to require of any band of men and women. And yet such has been the blessing of God, and such the eagerness of the people to hear, and such the zeal of the Filipino workers, aided by this little band

of Americans, that the quadrennium closes with the astonishing figures of twenty-seven thousand eight hundred probationers and members, an increase of about two hundred and fifty per cent during the four years. The work is much more compacted, the membership better trained, the churches better organized, and the religious life of the people greatly deepened. Churches and chapels have sprung up all over the land. On the Sunday of the last Conference session the great church on Calle Cervantes, seating fourteen hundred people, was opened by Bishop J. E. Robinson. This church, projected by Dr. Stuntz, our former superintendent, is perhaps the noblest Protestant building in Manila. At its opening the building was crowded and there were at least eight hundred young men in the audience. On the same day Saint Paul's Church, in Tondo, seating six hundred people, was dedicated, and the Gifford Memorial Church was opened in another part of the city and was filled with eager hearers, among whom Protestant worship was being held for the first time. And as in Manila so in all other portions of the territory—the people are eager to hear and opportunity is wide. O that the Church might embrace the day of its opportunity and send forth laborers and added means into this dead-ripe harvest field. In the northernmost portion of the Island of Luzon, in the Cagayan Valley, Oscar Huddleston, of Kansas, returns at the end of a single year to declare that, having organized fourteen congregations with a membership of seven hundred and seventy-two people, if he be given another missionary and his wife, with a mission house, a steam launch, and a few native preachers, he can promise a Methodist Church of twenty thousand members within the next ten years. And the promise is not extravagant. A Bible Training School for native preachers is being built by a good man in Kansas to the memory of his wife, while the Harris Memorial Deaconess Training School in Manila and a smaller similar institution in the north are providing the women leadership for the coming hosts of Methodism. A spirit of close fraternity prevails among the various denominations in these islands, and a movement is now on foot to create in Manila a Christian college, in the creation of which all the Protestant missions which operate in Luzon shall make a united effort.

PROPERTY

In the planting of the Christian Church among great populations in ancient lands the closest attention should be paid to the mission buildings, churches, hospitals, etc., which concrete and give outward expression to those ideas which Christianity conveys through the ministrations of her missionary agencies. A building in Asia is not merely a convenience for the carrying on of a piece of work—it is a significant, though silent, witness to the fact that Christianity has come and that some of its institutions have taken permanent and visible form. In reading a report of our Church properties in Southern Asia we but continue our statement of the progress of religion. The valuation of property in 1903 was 5,771,000 rupees; in 1907 the property value has risen to 9,561,000 rupees, an increase during the quadrennium of 3,790,000 rupees, a gain of sixty-five and two thirds per cent. We regret that this is not all paid for, for there is a debt against these properties of 1,160,000 rupees. Let it be noted, however, that the whole indebtedness, though large, is less than twelve per cent of the amount invested, and the gain for the quadrennium is more than three times as large as the entire amount of the indebtedness. While we greatly need help to clear this indebtedness, the figures are not such as to give any special anxiety.

The Board of Missions has not been able, from lack of resources, to make any large contributions for the purchase of property. There is, therefore, much room for special gifts to help in the property difficulties of Southern Asia.

It is morning in all these Oriental lands. Already the sunlight touches the hilltops and lies along their sloping sides. The teeming valleys below are yet in darkness, but the mists grow thin. The day advances; the shadows disappear. It will soon be high noon, and the glory of the Lord shall burst upon all the darkened millions of earth.

Price, Five Cents